



Press Contact:
Randy Giancaterino, randy.giancaterino@phila.gov

American John Crews and Canadian Jutta Merilainen race to a Philly finish and capture 2009 Philadelphia Marathon

Victories cap off record-high field of runners and successful Marathon weekend of events.

PHILADELPHIA – (November/December, 2009) – American John Crews and Canadian Jutta Merilainen were the top male and female finishers at the 2009 Philadelphia Marathon on Sunday, November 22, a perfect day for road racing; temperatures were crisp and skies were clear. A record 17,000 runners competed in the Marathon weekend's three events: the marathon, half marathon and the Rothman Institute 8K. More than 50,000 fans and friends lined the courses and cheered the runners on from curbside and from the 22 Marathon Cheer Zones that lined the course.

The prelude to the races, the two-day Philadelphia Marathon Health & Fitness Expo at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, attracted approximately 40,000 people to its exhibits, events and seminars on Friday, November 20 and Saturday, November 21. About 250 youngsters took part in Saturday morning's Verizon Kids Fun Run and 800 people fueled their engines at the Runners' Buffet Dinner on the evening before the races.

More than 5,000 hotel room nights were booked as a result of the Philadelphia Marathon.

Philadelphia Marathon Executive Director Melanie Johnson, said, "The marathon weekend events bring many benefits to the city. Not only do they encourage exercise and healthy lifestyles and provide an historic venue for classic distance races, they also are an economic boon for Philadelphia, bringing tens of thousands of runners and tourists who stay in our hotels, dine in our restaurants and sample the history that abounds in Philadelphia."

The Marathon Winners

John Crews, 25, of Raleigh, North Carolina, won the men's marathon, completing the 26.2 mile course in the third fastest time in the history of the event since 1994 (the first year the marathon was run completely inside city limits). His time of 2 hours, 17 minutes and 15 seconds was more than seven minutes clear of the second place finisher, 28 seconds off the course record set in 2003 by Kenyan Joseph Nderitu, and a qualifying time for the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Men's Marathon. Crews and his fiancée, Philadelphia native Amy Kelly, made this year's weekend a family event. Kelly finished third among women in the Rothman Institute 8K.

Canadian Jutta Merilainen, 37, won the women's division in 2:46:44. Merilainen, a mother of four who trains in the Toronto area, finished more than two minutes ahead of second place finisher, Doreen McCoubrie, 48, of Malvern, Pa., a top area runner who competed in the 2004 and 2008 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Women's Marathon.

Eight of the top 10 male and female finishers are from Pennsylvania and New Jersey, demonstrating the strong regional support for the race, as well as the talented pool of runners from the area.

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The top Philadelphia finisher in the men's marathon was Karl Savage, who finished third overall in 2:26:02. Among the women, the top Philadelphia finisher was Justyna Wilson who finished 14th in 2:59:35.

The Half Marathon Winners

The winner of the men's half marathon was Steve Hallinan of Washington, D.C., covering the 13.1-mile course in a time of 1:05:33. Teyba Naser from Albuquerque, New Mexico, won the women's event in 1:14:43.

Nine of the top 10 male and female finishers in the half marathon hail from Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

The Rothman Institute 8K Winners

Patrick Mellea from North Arlington, New Jersey, won the men's segment in 0:24:16, while former Villanova track star, Frances Koons from Bryn Mawr, Pa., won the women's race in 0:26:24.

Sixteen of the top 10 male and female finishers in the Rothman Institute 8K are from Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Running with a Purpose: Benefiting Charities and Honoring America's Soldiers

The Philadelphia Marathon and its runners continued the tradition of linking Philadelphia Marathon Race Weekend events with charities benefiting many causes.

Among the many organizations participating in 2009 was *Students Run Philly Style*, a mentoring program that uses long distance running to help young students succeed in life. This year 195 students, 82 mentors and more than 50 individual fundraisers participated.

For the *Perpetual Prosperity Pumps Foundation*, an organization that helps lift families from poverty by teaching sustainable farming practices to small farmers in West Africa, marathon runners and fans contributed gently used running shoes that will be used to help support small farm families.

Also taking part were: *Back on My Feet* (a group that uses running to teach work and life skills to the homeless in Philadelphia), *Best Buddies* (a volunteer movement helping those with intellectual developmental disabilities), *The Hearts & Smiles Foundation* (providing assistance to low income families with special needs children) and *The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team in Training* (raising funds for leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma research and patient services).

For the first time the Philadelphia Marathon sponsored an affiliated road race called the *Philadelphia Marathon First Wave Warrior Race*. The 2.62 mile race, which took place at the U.S. Army Base Hohenfels in Germany on November 17, honored the commitment and contributions of America's soldiers around the world while promoting running and fitness, with 320 participants.

The Philadelphia Marathon also continued to work with the *Bethesda Project* by retrieving outer layers of clothing that the runners jettison as they run. The Bethesda Project launders and distributes that clothing to the chronically homeless through 17 shelters and residences around the city.

About the Philadelphia Marathon

Established in 1994 with a competitive field of just 1,500 runners, the Philadelphia Marathon has emerged as the city's premier road race, spotlighting 26 miles and 385 yards of history. The Philadelphia Marathon is one of the nation's top marathons and continues to attract elite athletes worldwide, because of its swift, scenic course, which is considered one of the fastest in the United States and a top Boston Marathon qualifier. For more information, visit www.philadelphiamarathon.com.

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